



pRide



SPRING 1998

THE NEWSLETTER BY AND FOR

RHODE ISLAND STATE EMPLOYEES

EMPLOYEE BENEFIT ISSUES

Easy Ways to Learn About Your Vision Coverage and How to Use Your Eyecare Benefit.

Vision Service Plan makes it easy for you to use your eyecare benefits and to maintain your eye health.

- **Checking Your Benefits or Locating a VSP Doctor** — VSP supplies your benefits manager with fliers or brochures that outline your coverage plus listings of VSP participating doctors. Visit your benefits manager first to review your coverage and locate a VSP doctor. In addition, VSP offers two other ways to check your benefits or to find a doctor near your home or office.

1. **The Net** — Log on to the World Wide Web and go to **www.vsp.com**. To locate a VSP doctor, click on "Information for Members." Then, click on "Internet Doctor Directory." For benefits information, go to the Web site, click on "Information for Members." Then, click on "To Verify Eligible Benefits".

2. **Toll-Free Customer Service VSP Call Center** — Dial **1-800-877-7195** between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday, to speak to a live customer service representative. You may request an informational brochure outlining your benefits or a list of VSP doctors in your area.

- **Interactive Voice Response** — Use your telephone key pad after hours and on weekends to verify that a doctor participates in the VSP network or to determine your benefit information.

- **Setting an Appointment With Your VSP Doctor**
Step One — Once you've found a doctor, call the office to make an appointment. Provide the following information:
 - Your name and that you are a VSP member
 - Your VSP member group or employer
 - Your Social Security Number or other identification number
 - Your date of birth. Your doctor will obtain authorization for services.

- **Step Two** — Keep your scheduled appointment and make any copayments. VSP and your doctor will take care of the rest.

- **Visiting a Non-Participating Doctor** — Although more than 90 percent of members prefer a VSP doctor, the Plan recognizes the importance of choice when it comes to health care. That is why there is no time-consuming paperwork or extra steps to take if you choose a non-participating provider.

- **Step One** — After receiving care, pay for the services and request an itemized copy of your bill.

(Continued on page 2)

GOVERNOR SWEARS IN NEW DEA DIRECTOR



Governor Lincoln Almond swore in new Department of Elderly Affairs Director, **Barbara A. Rayner** in ceremonies held recently at the State House. Rayner is the former director of the Coventry Senior Center. From 1990 to her appointment as Elderly Affairs director, Rayner served as the

Director of the Coventry Department of Human Services.

"In my State of the State address, I outlined my vision for the Rhode Island's elder population and how we ought to provide centralized access to information and the services pertinent to them, declared Governor Almond. "I know Barbara will help make these goals a reality," he said.

"I share the vision of Governor Almond...to provide the most effective programs and services to help preserve the independence and dignity of elders. We must join together in partnerships which make the best use of our resources," Rayner observed.

"Good ideas are not the monopoly of one person or groups of persons. If we can share our ideas, we can achieve our goal of providing seniors in Rhode Island with responsive, compassionate programs while ensuring consumer-driven services in the most accessible framework," she declared.

ART OF THE STATE '98

Art of the State '98, an exhibit of the works of Rhode Island state employee artists, is currently on show at the Atrium Gallery at One Capitol Hill. Sixty current and retired state employees submitted paintings, drawings, photographs, and mixed media works. Even with adding a third wall to the gallery space, not every work submitted could be hung; but 77 pieces in the current exhibit include at least one work of each entrant.

Stop by and be dazzled by the talent and artistry of your colleagues. The exhibit will run through the end of April. Given the success of this first showing of state employee art, the Atrium Gallery Committee hopes to make this an annual event. Don't miss this high-spirited, eclectic, "something-to-be-proud-about" exhibit!



FROM THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Executive Orders

97-11.1 Clarifies membership on the Governor's Insurance Council.

97-13.1 Amends membership of Blue Ribbon Task Force.

For more information or copies of Executive Orders, call the **Office of the Executive Counsel, 222-2080, Ext. 258.**

OTD Training Courses

April	Fee
4/7 or 5/12 Intro to Windows 95	\$ 85
4/9 or Intro to Powerpoint	
5/19 (Version 7)	85
4/23 or 5/28 or Intro to Microsoft EXCEL	
5/29 for Windows	110
4/24 Intro to Lotus 1-2-3 for Windows	110
4/27 Intro to Access (Version 7)	85
4/28 Intro to Personal Computers	40
May	Fee
5/4 Intro to Wordperfect for Windows	110
5/5 Intermediate Windows 95	85

For more information on these and other training courses, call the **Office of Training and Development at 222-2877.** For hearing impaired **TDD 222-6144.**

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

(Continued from page 1)

• **Step Two** — Send the itemized copy of your bill to VSP along with a completed HCFA-1500 or generic insurance claim form to: **Vision Service Plan, 3333 Quality Drive, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670.** VSP will process your claim and reimburse you according to your reimbursement schedule.

Flexible Benefits Plan Rules Revisited (Again!)

The state's Flexible Benefits Plan, or Cafeteria Plan, includes the Group Life Plan (first \$50,000 in coverage), the Short Term Disability Plan, Cancer Plan, Dependent Day Care, and Classic Blue and Harvard Pilgrim PPO premiums. These plans are offered on a pre-tax basis under Internal Revenue Codes. These codes do not allow change in benefits, including stopping deductions during the

plan year (calendar) unless there is a change in family status. Changes can only be made during the fall open enrollment. Change in family status includes termination, layoff or loss of coverage under a spouse's plan. Application forms are available from the Office of State Employee Benefits should you require them **(222-3160).**

YWCA Offering Courses and Workshops

The YWCA of Greater Rhode Island is offering a variety of new Spring courses and workshops that include the following programs: **Conversational Spanish - Quilting & Gift Making** (for the home and for gift giving). Also being offered is a **Personal Development Workshop Series** for women entering or re-entering the workforce, and for women who are re-careering. Topics in the series include: **Personal Change — Building Self Esteem — Building a Professional Image — Dressing for the Workplace — and Etiquette and Professionalism.**

A two-part series of workshops entitled **Preparing for Career Exploration**, will cover topics such as **Career Mapping — Resume/Cover Letter Writing — How to Build Your Networking Skills and Interviewing Skills.**

All of the above courses and workshops will be held at the **YWCA of Greater Rhode Island, 1035 Branch Avenue, Providence.** For information on schedules, fees, or to register, please call **Joanne Hagopian at 831-9922.**

MHRH and Council 94 — AFSCME Establish Cooperative Program

With a \$50,000 grant from the Mediation and Conciliation Service, U.S. Department of Labor, the R.I. Department of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals and Council 94-AFSCME will establish a Labor-Management Cooperative program to develop labor relations processes that support workplace productivity and a quality workplace environment. This unique program is the result of the work of MHRH Director **A. Kathryn Power** and **Thomas Chellé**, AFSCME president. The two jointly applied for the grant in order to equip department officials and key labor leaders with the skills to cooperatively look at issues, and find common ground that engenders the provision of quality public sector services, without interfering with any collective bargaining agreements.

pRide, the state employees' newsletter, is published by the Division of Human Resources, Department of Administration, William E. Powers Building, One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908-5860. 222-2200

Director of Administration:
Robert L. Carl, Jr., PhD

Personnel Administrator:
Anthony A. Buccì

Editor-in-Chief:
Donald J. Boisvert

Executive Editor:
Beverly A. Dwyer

Photographer:
Chet Browning, MHRH

Advisory Board:

Susan Anderson, NBC • Patricia Borges, MHRH • Becky Bovell, DED • Eric Cote, GO • John DiTomasso, DOA • Anne Gregson, URI • Joan Grenga, CJTD • Jane Grenier, DCYF • Larry Grimaldi, DEA • Douglas Hartley, PUC • Frank Iacono, DLS • Steve Klamkin, GTO • Raymond LaBelle, EMA • Linda McArthur, RIHMFC • Delma McConnell, RILC • Sandra Nadeau, CCP • Nancy Pifford, DET • Michelle Santos, DOH • Barbara Simmons, CRMC

Deadline for contributions to the Summer issue is May 10, 1998.

The State of Rhode Island is an equal opportunity employer and reasonable accommodations will be provided. For assistance, call EEO Office at 222-3990. (TDD 222-6144).

MENTORS NEEDED

Could You Help Guide a Woman to a New Beginning?

Women's Prison Mentoring Program

Female mentors are needed for women preparing to leave prison and rejoin the community. These women are carefully screened and motivated to make their transition a successful one. They truly benefit from having a mentor who will encourage and support them as they prepare to reestablish their lives in the community. You can help by sharing your experiences and advice. If you can spend one hour a week assisting a woman in reaching her goals, please call **Judith Fox at 464-3161.**

Mentors from **ALL** backgrounds are welcome. Minorities are encouraged to apply.

For more information please call: **Judith B. Fox, Coordinator, Women's Mentoring Program, Box 8312, Cranston, RI 02920 401-464-3161.**

pRlde in performance



From **William Gill** and **Scott George**

The New England Water Environment Association (NEWEA) presented **Scott George** its prestigious **Alfred E. Peloquin Award** at a ceremony in late January.

George is Zambarano's waste water process monitor, and oversees the operation and management of the waste water treatment plant at the facility.

Over the past several years, working with **William Gill**, construction operations chief, he helped plan and implement a program of upgrades and new construction at the treatment plant that produces water that far exceeds state and federal requirements.

The rehabilitated facility now cleans water with state-of-the-art equipment and up-to-date methods, and is the first in the state to use Ultra-Violet technology to disinfect the water. It is expected that Zambarano's experience with UV will become a model and be used to educate officials of cities and towns throughout the state on the effectiveness of the UV system. NEWEA is a professional organization of treatment plant personnel, engineers and regulatory officials throughout the six New England States. The Peloquin Award is presented annually to an individual in each state who has shown a high level of interest and performance in waste water operations, and has made a significant contribution to the waste water field, in areas such as improvements to the environment, cost-effective plant operations, innovative process controls, industrial pre-treatment or related activities.

WHAT IS ERGONOMICS?

by **Joseph V. Cardillo, Jr., Chair,**
Department of Administration
Health and Safety Committee

The term "ergonomics" comes from the Greek words *ergon* (work) and *nomos* (law). Ergonomics can be simply defined as the study of work. Industrial ergonomics deals with the interaction between people, machines, and their environment. As a science, ergonomics matches work demands with worker strengths and limitations through proper design of jobs, products, workplaces, and equipment. It focuses on how people can effectively function in their work environment. For example, ergonomics considers the design and function of controls, displays, safety devices, lighting, temperature, workplace layout, tools and work methods. Ergonomics helps adapt the job to fit the person, not force the person to fit the job. Adapting the job to fit the worker can help reduce or eliminate many potential injuries and illnesses. A closer look at some jobs and how their demands may affect worker safety and health will provide a better understanding of the role and importance of ergonomics in protecting workers.

BITS 'n PIECES FROM DCYF

DCYF has adopted new Vision and Mission Statements. In officially issuing the statements and related guiding principles, Department Director **Jay G. Lindgren, Jr.** told the staff, "Our vision and mission should guide everything we do in our servicing of clients, planning and management of the Department".

The mission of the department is "to assist families with their primary responsibility to raise their children to become productive members of society".

Serving on the committee drafting the Vision and Mission Statements were: **Dave Allenson, Larry Bartley, Annette Bedrosian, Matt Collins, Lauren Dyer, Nancy Herrington, Carolyn Lecount, Joanne Lehrer, George McCabe, Barry Noel, Bruce Rollins** and **Tom Tedeschi**.

— Submitted by **Jane D. Grenier**

DCYF employee contributions to the State Employees Charitable Appeal this year increased **42%** over last year. There was also a corresponding increase in the number of agency contributors. The new department network system and e-mail made a significant difference, but the biggest difference however, was the team who worked on the campaign: **Brenda Almieda, Robin Perez, Elizabeth Butler, Stephanie Fogli-Terry, Gus Bucci, Kathleen McCann, Laurie Ward, Susan Morris, Joanne Sherman, Anita Butler, Oryann Lima, Warren Hurlbut, and Bruce Rollins**. Thanks to the team and to all who contributed.

— Submitted by **Lee J. Bonner**
1997 SECA Coordinator

Mr. Edwin Hutchings, who served the children and their families of the state of Rhode Island for twenty eight years with distinction, has retired. Most of his professional life was spent in child welfare services on the front line and in administration.

Starting his career in the Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services as a caseworker, then moving on to the child welfare component, he continually strove to improve his skills in the field of social work as evidenced by the many training courses taken, seminars attended and his graduation from the University of Connecticut with a Master's degree in Social Work.

Throughout his career, his counsel was sought by many in the agency including several department directors. He was also selected to represent the department at numerous federal conferences, and his experiences aided the further development of the agency.

Mr. Hutchings was a contributing partner in developing the pilot project with the Rhode Island Family Court whereby federal reviews are now done on a shared basis. He was most useful in the development of the Administrative Review Unit's policy, not to mention the many other policy issues to which he contributed. His departure will be felt by many, and we all wish him success in the future.

— Submitted by **C. William Gallagher**

Karen Renzulli from foster care licensing has accepted an exciting position with the new Family Court Mediation Program. In an effort to support the over 200% increase in the day care home referrals, DHS is supporting three new day care licensing positions, one of which is a Spanish-speaking day care licensing worker. A new fire inspector will be added as well.

— Submitted by **Lee Sperduti**

Caseworker **Angela Iannotti** and her husband are the proud parents of a baby girl, **Maria Iannotti Faria** born January 18. Congratulations from "all staff" at DCYF!



the summer of 1998. Summer session tuition rates for out-of-state students will be cut by 50 percent and summer session tuition rates for in-state students will be cut by 10 percent. Tuition for in-state undergraduates will be \$118 per credit hour; tuition for out-of-state undergraduates will be \$226 per credit hour. The topic of summer session came up as part of an open space agenda in May, 1997, resulting in the formation of a Summer Session Task Force consisting of faculty and staff. A survey of more than 3,700 URI students was conducted last November. The Task Force made a recommendation to President Carothers who approved it and brought it to the Board of Governors for Higher Education who granted formal approval. Summer Session schedules will be available April 1. For more information on URI's Summer Session, call **874-2107** or **222-5000** or visit the Registrar's web page at <http://www.uri.edu/registrar>.

As part of a national initiative, the University of Rhode Island was awarded a three-year \$391,000 HUD grant to work as a partner with communities and agencies to revitalize the Woodlawn section of Pawtucket. **Dr. Marcia Marker Feld**, head of URI's Field Center, is director of the initiative HUD calls Community Outreach Partnerships (COPC). The Urban Field Center, the outreach component of URI's Graduate Department of Community Planning and Area Development, is located at URI's Providence Campus and has been working in urban areas since 1972. The work of the Center, using university resources in partnership with community residents, largely contributed to URI being designated an Urban Grant University in 1996. "Most of the money will go to community organizations," said Dr. Feld. "URI will provide coordination and education under the direction of a community advisory board." Other community partners include Rhode Island School of Design and Roger Williams University School of Law. The grant is part of \$7.3 million in HUD grants allocated in September to 25 colleges and universities to help revitalize distressed, low-income neighborhoods.

Visitors to the University's Narragansett Campus are now able to explore the boundaries of the oceans while still on land. Thanks to the creativity of URI's Office of Marine Programs Director **Sara Hickox**, and a \$663,000 grant from the National Science Foundation, people throughout Rhode Island and the nation may now have a better understanding of what it really means to "live on the edge." *Living on the Edge* is a permanent exhibit that has been three years in the making. It opened its doors at the URI Coastal Institute Visitors Center on the Narragansett Bay Campus on November 1, 1997. Among the volunteers who made this exhibit possible are the award-winning Rhode Island author and illustrator **David Macaulay**; noted theatre director and URI Professor **Judith Swift**; and eminent scientist, former head of NOAA, and former Dean of URI's Graduate School of Oceanography, **Dr. John Knauss**. *Living on the Edge* focuses on the array of traditional tools and new technologies that are being used to enhance practical understanding of the oceans. The exhibit includes eight multi-faceted interactive activity centers encompassing about 1,500 square feet and highlighting technology used to study the Gulf Stream and changing coastlines. For more information about exhibit hours or group and school programs, call URI's Office of Marine Programs at **874-6211**.

NOTES FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Project Undercover — The R.I. Exchange Program and the Girl Scouts of R.I. have partnered together to bring attention to the need for new socks, underwear and diapers for some 30,000 children under the age of seven living in poverty in RI. Through **Project Undercover**, the group will try to generate enough donations to stock a statewide network of community-based agencies with enough underclothing to meet emergency needs. State employees, who have always rallied to assist in many causes, are asked to get involved and contribute by contacting the designated coordinator in each of the following state agencies: Transportation — **Jan Loiselle, 222-2023, Ext. 4096**; National Guard — **Major Jeannine Vachon, 457-4132**, or **Major Patricia Ryan, 457-4124**; DCYF — **Pat Watkins, 528-3987**; DHS — **Gail Dunphy, 464-3248**; Labor & Training — **David McAndrew, 222-3550**; RI State Police, **Linda Fraccola, 444-1121**; Higher Education — **Cathleen Drennan, 222-6560, Ext. 129**; Elderly Affairs — **Ernie Shaghalian, 222-6161, Ext. 117**; Economic Development — **Andrea Adamo, 222-2601, Ext. 101**; Business Regulations — **Lucy Ponte, 222-2246, Ext. 2405**; Elementary/Secondary Education — **Arlene Price-Thrasher, 222-4600**; Dept. of Health — **Michelle Santos, 222-2901**; MHRH — **Patricia Borges, 464-3312**; Administration Personnel — **Fran Cirillo, 222-6699**.

Retirement - **Mr. John Lopes**, who has worked as a social worker or case manager for the Department of Human Services for **41 years**, retired from the 111 Fountain Street Office on February 27, 1998, at the age of **79**. The son of Cape Verdean immigrants, John joined the Army a few months before the bombing of Pearl Harbor and served in the South Pacific for three years. In 1952, several years after his discharge, John earned a degree in business administration from Bryant College. In 1956 he began his work with the Department of Human Services, then known as the Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services. During his very lengthy career in state service, John earned the respect and admiration of his colleagues and his clients alike, and has been called an "inspiration" to all who know him. Congratulations to an outstanding state employee and an equally outstanding person on a job very well done!

— Contributed by **Tracey Manni**

IMPROVED RECYCLING PROGRAM FOR STATE AGENCIES UNDERWAY

If you work in the greater Providence area, look for changes in the way you recycle paper. When? Starting in April. **What to expect** • You will receive a green bin • You will be able to recycle more kinds of paper • The instructions you receive with the green bin will tell you what and how • Your Director has designated a Recycling Coordinator who will make certain that you receive the green bin and the list of do's and don'ts. With the new, easier system, we can all help cut pollution and save more trees and energy. The new system will also save money on disposal and even return dollars to the state when paper prices are up.

Questions? Concerns? Contact your agency's recycling coordinator or **Tom Armstrong** at **DEM 222-3434, Ext. 4412**.

Sites for Uniform State Agency Recycling: State House • Dept. of Adm. • Dept. of Transportation • Dept. of Health • Dept. of Atty. General • Courts — Garrahy Judicial Complex — Prov. County Court — Kent County Court • RI Army/Nat'l Guard • E-911 Emergency Telephone System • Dept. of Children, Youth & Families • Dept. of Human Services • Dept. of Mental Health, Retardation & Hospitals (8 locations/bldgs) • Dept. of Corrections.

— Contributed by **Bill Pett, DEM**

NEW MEMBERS WANTED

For innovative health plan. Our system of coordinated care provides comprehensive coverage and promotes members' own good health by emphasizing prevention. We offer: **Simplicity.** Members choose a personal physician who coordinates their care and guides them through the health care system. **No claims to file, no calls for preauthorization, no paperwork.** **Flexibility.** Members are free to seek care out-of-network or without a referral and still get coverage at 80% of our allowance for covered services (after deductible). **Choice.** Members have access to more than 1,700 of Rhode Island's top physicians. And since most participate with our other health plans, members enjoy an easy transition into their new plan. **Affordability.** Low out-of-pocket costs, and no deductibles or dollar maximums when care is coordinated by personal physician.

Ideal candidates for this position will have a strong desire for quality, easy-to-access care. Many openings available. No experience necessary. To apply, call BlueCHIP at 274-3500 or 1-800-564-0888.

BlueCHIP
Coordinated Health Partners, Inc.
BLUE CROSS & BLUE SHIELD OF RI

NEW!

WANTED

Simple, affordable health plan.
Busy state employees
looking for plan that delivers
comprehensive coverage
with low out-of-pocket costs.
Preventive care coverage
and easy provider access
preferred. Flexibility, large
provider network a plus.
Apply to: Rhode Island State
Employees, One Capitol Hill,
Providence R.I. No calls,
please.